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**AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER
ANNOUNCES THE PROJECTS FOR
A.C.T.'S INAUGURAL NEW STRANDS RESIDENCY PROGRAM**

**THREE PLAYWRIGHTS/PLAYS FROM
NEW YORK CITY'S ACCLAIMED MA-YI THEATER COMPANY TO PARTICIPATE**

**The New Strands Residency gives American playwrights
the opportunity to create and develop new works in residence at
A.C.T.'s state-of-the-art Strand Theater**

SAN FRANCISCO (March 27, 2017)—Today, **American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.)'s Associate Artistic Director Andy Donald** announced the first projects to be chosen for A.C.T.'s inaugural **New Strands Residency** program. Three playwrights/plays from New York City's acclaimed **Ma-Yi Theater Company** will participate. They include: *The Great Leap* by **Lauren Yee**, *The Man from Saigon* by **Don Nguyen**, and *Snowflakes, or Rare White People* by **Dustin Chinn**. The New Strands Residency gives emerging and established American playwrights the opportunity to create and develop new works in residence at A.C.T.'s state-of-the-art Strand Theater, located in the heart of San Francisco's Central Market neighborhood.

"When we put the call out to the Ma-Yi Writers Lab for the inaugural year of this program, we were overwhelmed by the amount of spectacular new work that came in from its membership," says Donald. "These are all writers who are zeroed in on today's American culture—its contradictions, its divisive politics, its future—so choosing just three was an enviable challenge. We could not be more thrilled to share Lauren, Don, and Dustin's searing, often hilarious, deeply personal, and poignant work and watch it continue to grow with this esteemed group of directors and our San Francisco audience."

Each year, A.C.T. will partner with a nationally recognized new-work incubator to select three playwrights who will spend a week in San Francisco. This year's partner theater company is the Drama Desk and Obie Award-winning not-for-profit **Ma-Yi Theater Company**. Based in New York City, Ma-Yi is one of the country's leading incubators of new work shaping the national discourse about what it means to be Asian American today.

Over the course of their residency, the three playwrights will participate in a reading of their work, develop and workshop their plays-in-progress with directors and a shared ensemble of actors, and sit on various panel discussions. The New Strands Residency culminates with a free public presentation of their work during A.C.T.'s annual New Strands Festival, now in its second year, taking place **May 19–21, 2017**. The complete lineup for the New Strands Festival will be announced in early April 2017.

The three selected playwrights/plays from Ma-Yi Theater Company for the 2017 New Strands Residency are:

The Great Leap

by Lauren Yee

Directed by Lisa Peterson

When an American college basketball team travels to Beijing for a “friendship” game in the post-Cultural Revolution 1980s, both countries try to tease out the politics behind this newly popular sport. Cultures clash as the Chinese coach tries to pick up moves from the Americans and Chinese American player Manfred spies on his opponents. Inspired by events in the playwright's father's life.

The Man from Saigon

by Don Nguyen

Directed by Hal Brooks

As Saigon nears collapse in 1975, a South Vietnamese intelligence agent forges a complicated friendship with Richard Armitage, a charismatic US officer who would later become George W. Bush's deputy secretary of state. A political thriller based on the story of the playwright's father.

Snowflakes, Or Rare White People

by Dustin Chinn

Directed by Mina Morita

In a non-dystopian future, the dwindling white American population is protected by the federal government. Two of the last White Americans are brought to Nueva New York's Museum of Natural History but are “freed” by a disgruntled activist. Is America ready for their return?

The New Strands Festival features new theatrical pieces, works in progress, and readings, as well as experimental work by innovative artists across different disciplines, including music, animation, and more. Devoted to supporting local, national, and international artists in the creation and completion of original theater, the New Strands Festival enables artists to connect and communities to experience theatrical projects as they take shape, all under one roof at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater.

The inaugural New Strands Residency with Ma-Yi Theater Company is supported by a **Building Demand Grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** and the new A.C.T. Asian stARTup initiative to bring together Asian/Asian American artists and tech workers in the Bay Area.

The New Strands Festival is made possible by **The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Fund for New Works, Theatre Forward**, and the **Priscilla and Keith Geeslin New Strands Fund**.

For additional information on the New Strands Residency Program or A.C.T.'s New Play Commissions, visit: www.act-sf.org/home/about/new_commissions.highResolutionDisplay.html.

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